

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 CAPE T 00237 091524Z

47

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01

/081 W

----- 057399

R 091400Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4999

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

US MISSION USUN NEW YORK 1081

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 0237

E.O.11652:N/A

TAGS: AO,UR,PINS,CU,SF

SUBJ: CHANCE OF CLASH IN ANGOLA APPEARS SMALL AT PRESENT

CAPE TIMES MARCH 9 FEATURED FOLLOWING DESCRIPTION OF
MILITARY SITUATION IN ANGOLA. IT IS REPORTEDLY BASED ON INTERVIEW
OF SENIOR SAG OFFICIALS BY JOHANNESBURG CORRESPONDENT OF REUTERS
AND SUBSEQUENTLY CLEARED FOR RELEASE BY SAG.

'CUTBACK IN RED ARMS FOR ANGOLA'

'PRETORIA- THE SOVIET UNION APPERS TO BE RAPIDLY CUTTING BACK
ITS SUPPLY OF SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS TO ANGOLA, INFORMED SOURCES
HERE SAID YESTERDAY.

'THEY SAID THERE HAD BEEN A MARKED REDUCTION IN RECENT
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 CAPE T 00237 091524Z

WEEKS OF SHIPMENTS OF EQUIPMENT SUCH AS TANKS AND ROCKETS

ARRIVING IN LUANDA, THE ANGOLAN CAPITAL.

'AND SO FAR THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF A SOVIET CUBAN BUILD-UP AGAINST RHODESIA.

'THE SOURCES ALSO DISCLOSED THAT CUBAN TROOPS WERE NOT AS CLOSE AS PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT TO SOUTH AFRICAN POSITIONS IN THE FAR SOUTH OF ANGOLA.

'THEY SAID BLACK TROOPS OF THE MPLA GOVERNMENT WERE HOLDING A LINE ROUGHLY BETWEEN THE PORT OF MOCAMEDES, EASTWARD THROUGH SA DA BANDEIRA, SERPA PINTO, QUITO CUANAVALE AND CANGAMBA.

'THIS IS ABOUT 200 KM AT ITS CLOSEST POINT FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES GUARDING HYDRO-ELECTRIC INSTALLATIONS AND REFUGEE CAMPS AT PEREIRA D'ECA, CALUEQUE AND RUACANA.

'BUT THE SOURCES SAID CUBAN TROOPS WHO SPEAR-HEADED THE MPLA'S SOUTHWARD DRIVE IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY WERE HOLDING BACK AT A LINE MUCH FARTHER NORTH, MARKED BY THE TOWNS OF BENGUELA, NOVA LISBOA (HUAMBO) SILVA PORTO AND LUSO. THIS IS MORE THAN 500 KM FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCES.

'THE REASON FOR THIS HOLD-BACK IS NOT KNOWN. BUT, TOGETHER WITH THE DWINDLING SUPPLIES OF SOPHISTICATED SOVIET WEAPONS, IT APPEARS TO SUGGEST THAT THE MPLA AND CUBANS ARE NOT SEEKING A MAJOR SHOWDOWN AT THIS STAGE WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS.

'OTHER SOVIET MILITARY SUPPLIES, INCLUDING RIFLES AND TRANSPORT, WERE CONTINUING, PRESUMABLY DESTINED TO MAINTAIN MPLA SUPERIORITY IN THE GUERRILLA WAR BEING WAGED BY THE MPLA'S MAJOR OPPONENT, UNITA.

'THE SOURCES SAID THESE WEAPONS, AND THE FORWARD POSITION OF THE BLACK MPLA SOLDIERS, COULD ALSO BE INTENDED TO STRENGTHEN SWAPO, THE SOUTH WEST AFRICA PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION, IN ITS CAMPAIGN TO FORCE AN END

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 CAPE T 00237 091524Z

TO SOUTH AFRICA'S DISPUTED RULE OF SOUTH WEST AFRICA.

'AT THE MOMENT, AND IN SPITE OF UNCONFIRMED REPORTS OF CUBAN TROOPS AND SOVIET TANKS BEING LANDED IN MOZAMBIQUE, THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE THAT THE SOVIET-BACKED FORCES WERE ACTIVELY TURNING THEIR ATTENTION FROM ANGOLA TO ITS NEIGHBOUR, RHODESIA, THE SOURCES SAID.

'WAITING:

'POLITICAL OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIET UNION
AND CUBA ARE PREPARED TO WAIT AT LEAST UNTIL IT IS CLEAR
WHETHER THERE IS ANY CHANCE OF A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN
RHODESIA BEFORE CONSIDERING MILITARY INVOLVEMENT THERE.

' IN ANGOLA, THE CUBAN TROOPS WERE BEING REPLACED ON
A REGULAR DUTY-TOUR BASIS, THE SOURCES SAID. THEY
STILL NUMBERED BETWEEN 9,000 AND 12,000 AND WERE NOT BEING
REINFORCED.

' NONE OF THEM WERE DEPLOYED SOUTH OF THE BENGUELA
LINE BUT FARTHER SOUTH OF THE BLACK MPLA FORCES WERE MORE
ACTIVE. THEY SEEMED INTENT ON CONSOLIDATING THEIR
EASTWARD LINE FROM SA DA BANDEIRA.

'THE SOURCES SAID THAT TO SECURE THIS LINE,THE
MPLA WOULD HAVE TO DEPLOY FORCES UP TO 80 KM SOUTH
OF IT.'

BOWDLER

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, MILITARY EQUIPMENT, COMBAT OPERATIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976CAPET00237
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760089-0389
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760381/aaaactox.tel
Line Count: 136
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 AUG 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 AUG 2004 by meiwc>; APPROVED <08 DEC 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHANCE OF CLASH IN ANGOLA APPEARS SMALL AT PRESENT CAPE TIMES MARCH 9 FEATURED FOLLOWING DESCRIPTION OF
TAGS: PINS, AO, UR, CU, SF
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006